

**To:** Parker, Robert[Parker.Robert@epa.gov]; Murray, Bill[Murray.Bill@epa.gov]; Ketellapper, Victor[Ketellapper.Victor@epa.gov]; Miller, Johanna[Miller.Johanna@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** Peterson, Cynthia[Peterson.Cynthia@epa.gov]; Smith, Paula[Smith.Paula@epa.gov]  
**From:** Wendel, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thur 4/14/2016 8:13:25 PM  
**Subject:** RE: ACTION: Daily Caller; Bonita Peak Mining District HRS; DEADLINE 5 pm today

Rob, I believe this was forwarded to Paula for response by the Region.

**From:** Parker, Robert  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 14, 2016 3:55 PM  
**To:** Murray, Bill <Murray.Bill@epa.gov>; Ketellapper, Victor <Ketellapper.Victor@epa.gov>; Miller, Johanna <Miller.Johanna@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** Wendel, Jennifer <Wendel.Jennifer@epa.gov>; Peterson, Cynthia <Peterson.Cynthia@epa.gov>; Smith, Paula <Smith.Paula@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: ACTION: Daily Caller; Bonita Peak Mining District HRS; DEADLINE 5 pm today

Region 8 folks + Jennifer W –

I'm not sure who is taking the lead in responding to these questions, but I wanted to provide a few facts which might help respond to this general discussion. It seems the reporter believes the HRS package identifies EPA's priorities in regard to risk at the site. I want to be really clear that I don't view the Hazard Ranking System as a risk assessment, and I'm sure others would agree. It is a numerical screening model, prescribed by regulation, used to determine eligibility for the NPL.

Using the HRS, EPA assigns certain points for various types of receptors actually or potentially impacted by hazardous substances for each evaluated pathway. For the Bonita Peak site, EPA evaluated the surface water pathway and, using the HRS, documented the site is eligible to be included on the NPL based on the presence of fisheries and a threatened species relative to the observed releases of hazardous substances at the site.

EPA is aware that hazardous constituents have been and continue to release to fisheries within the watershed, but it is unknown at this point the risks to the human food chain. Additional data collection is required before risks to the human food chain are understood.

Rob

Rob Parker, P.E.  
Site Assessment Manager  
Environmental Engineer  
US EPA, Region 8, Denver  
(303) 312-6664

**From:** Murray, Bill  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 14, 2016 1:12 PM  
**To:** Parker, Robert <[Parker.Robert@epa.gov](mailto:Parker.Robert@epa.gov)>; Ketellapper, Victor <[Ketellapper.Victor@epa.gov](mailto:Ketellapper.Victor@epa.gov)>; Miller, Johanna <[Miller.Johanna@epa.gov](mailto:Miller.Johanna@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: ACTION: Daily Caller; Bonita Peak Mining District HRS; DEADLINE 5 pm today

fyi

**From:** Belle, Kara  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 14, 2016 1:09 PM  
**To:** Smith, Paula <[Smith.Paula@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Paula@epa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Peterson, Cynthia <[Peterson.Cynthia@epa.gov](mailto:Peterson.Cynthia@epa.gov)>; Cohen, Nancy <[Cohen.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Cohen.Nancy@epa.gov)>; Wells, Suzanne <[Wells.Suzanne@epa.gov](mailto:Wells.Suzanne@epa.gov)>; Fitz-James, Schatzi <[Fitz-James.Schatzi@epa.gov](mailto:Fitz-James.Schatzi@epa.gov)>; Murray, Bill <[Murray.Bill@epa.gov](mailto:Murray.Bill@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: ACTION: Daily Caller; Bonita Peak Mining District HRS; DEADLINE 5 pm today

Hi Paula,

See inquiry from the Daily Caller below. I think you all could provide the best response. Please let me know if you think differently. The deadline is 5pm est

Kara Belle

Community Involvement and Program Initiatives Branch

Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

(703)603-8815

**From:** Lemon, Mollie

**Sent:** Thursday, April 14, 2016 2:52 PM

**To:** Belle, Kara <[Belle.Kara@epa.gov](mailto:Belle.Kara@epa.gov)>; Gartner, Lois <[Gartner.Lois@epa.gov](mailto:Gartner.Lois@epa.gov)>; Wells, Suzanne <[Wells.Suzanne@epa.gov](mailto:Wells.Suzanne@epa.gov)>

**Cc:** Cohen, Nancy <[Cohen.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Cohen.Nancy@epa.gov)>; Deitz, Randy <[Deitz.Randy@epa.gov](mailto:Deitz.Randy@epa.gov)>; Glikes, Michael <[Glikes.Michael@epa.gov](mailto:Glikes.Michael@epa.gov)>; Hull, George <[Hull.George@epa.gov](mailto:Hull.George@epa.gov)>

**Subject:** ACTION: Daily Caller; Bonita Peak Mining District HRS; DEADLINE 5 pm today

Hi all –

Incoming Gold King inquiry below, with a deadline of 5 pm today. Could you please also loop in and coordinate with the appropriate regional staff?

Thanks in advance!

Mollie

*Mollie Lemon*

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

*Office of Media Relations*

202.343.9859

**From:** Ethan Barton [<mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org>]

**Sent:** Thursday, April 14, 2016 2:25 PM  
**To:** Press <[Press@epa.gov](mailto:Press@epa.gov)>; Lemon, Mollie <[Lemon.Mollie@epa.gov](mailto:Lemon.Mollie@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Bonita Peak Mining District HRS

Here's the link to the HRS document, for your convenience:

<https://semspub.epa.gov/work/08/1769520.pdf>

On Thu, Apr 14, 2016 at 2:24 PM, Ethan Barton <[ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org](mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org)> wrote:

Hello,

I have some questions regarding the Bonita Peak Mining District HRS Documentation Record.

I would like to know why the drinking water threat was not scored. The document shows that ground water migration pathway was not scored because of the low population density and because there are "no municipal wells located within the four mile radius that serve as potable supplies."

However, Silverton, Colorado, Farmington, New Mexico, and the Navajo Nation have all had their water supplies affected by the Gold King Mine release, which suggests water supplies are, in fact, impacted by the Bonita Peak Mining District.

Additionally, both the human food chain and the environmental threats scored the max values. How is it that the EPA claims the river is safe for humans and that drinking water is not affected, yet the human food chain is heavily threatened?

Given the threat to the human food chain, have residents who live in the area who consume wildlife, such as fishers in Silverton, Colorado, been warned of this threat and been given guidance?

In sum:

1. Why was drinking water not assessed in the HRS, given the details provided?
2. How can the human food chain be so heavily threatened, but the drinking water, as well as the Animas River, is safe for humans?
3. Has the EPA warned local residents and provided guidance on the threat to the human food chain?

My deadline is end of business today.

Thanks,

Ethan

Ethan Barton

Investigative Reporter

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Ethan Barton

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